

# THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.

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## HOLINESS.

“SPEAK unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.—Levit. xix. 2.

God is holy: Christ is holy: the Spirit is holy. These three are one—glorious in holiness; and the adoration of this holiness is a part of the worship of heaven, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.”

When God created man, he created him in his own image. God is a Spirit; and it was the spirit, therefore, of man, and not the body, which he invested with his own resemblance. “Let us,” said the triune Jehovah, “make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him.” The green earth, in the morning of the creation, did not shine more bright and fair beneath the virgin beams of the new-born sun, than did the soul of man shine forth to the admiring eyes of the innumerable angels, reflecting the moral image of Jehovah. God made man holy; for holiness is the image of God.

This image man lost by sin. The moment he became a transgressor, man became unholy. His understanding was darkened; his heart was alienated from the life of God; guilty passions took possession of his bosom, and an evil conscience filled his soul with terror and remorse. Behold the guilty pair in paradise! Emphatic and sad are the words of the sacred narrative—“And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the garden.”

To recover man to holiness, and restore him to that image which he lost by sin, is one great design of God in the scheme of salvation. Has God chosen his people in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world? "It is that they may be holy and without blame before him in love." Did Christ give himself for them an offering and a sacrifice? It is that "he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. Does the Holy Spirit take possession of their hearts? It is that they "may be saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Does God reveal his perfections in the Scriptures, and in the incarnation, life, and sacrifice of his Son? All this is done with the design of exhibiting his moral character before us, in order that we may catch the sacred likeness, grow into the same image, and become partakers of his holiness. "Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." Let us consider,

I. The holiness here enjoined: "*Ye shall be holy.*"

II. The model of holiness, and the motive to it here exhibited—God's own holiness: "*For I the Lord your God am holy.*"

1. The holiness enjoined: "*Ye shall be holy.*"

1. Consider holiness in regard to its *nature*. What is holiness? Wherein does holiness consist? Holiness consists in resemblance to the moral excellence of God. God is not only the greatest, but the best of all beings. He is not only possessed of infinite power, but he is possessed of infinite moral excellence. All the displays of moral excellence that we see in angels or in men, are only indications, reflections, emanations, sparks of that moral excellence which is treasured up boundless and eternal in the Godhead. The moral excellence of God is the *foundation* of holiness: the discovery of that moral excellence by divine revelation is the *supreme rule* of holiness. Men, therefore, are holy, just in proportion as they resemble the nature and are conformed to the revealed will of God. God is opposed to moral evil: holiness therefore is opposition to sin in all its forms and all its kinds. God is good; holiness therefore consists in the love and practice of good—good of all kinds, and good in all relations. He that doth good is of God. He that committeth sin is of the devil. The good man resembles God: he is merciful as God is merciful; kind as God is kind; compassionate as God is compassionate; bountiful and forgiving as God is bountiful and



forgiving. In all subjects of moral aversion or of moral delight, approbation or disapprobation, he is like God. In all moral respects he is a partaker of the divine nature. The sinner, on the contrary, is of his father the devil. He resembles the evil one. Like Satan, he hates good and loves evil. Like him, he is a liar; like him, a blasphemer; like him, he tempts others to sin and to perdition; like him, he is full of malice and revenge; like him, he is hateful and hating; like him, he makes sin his element and his delight. Shocking likeness! Dreadful resemblance! My soul, come not thou into his secret!

2. Consider holiness with regard to its *seat*. The seat of holiness is the heart. There is an external holiness—holiness of life—holiness in the actions; but this holiness is only the expression, the outward and visible manifestation of that principle of holiness which resides within. There it has its seat, its power, and its great authority. In the absence of inward principle, the outward profession of holiness is hypocrisy: “its root is as rottenness, and the blossom thereof goeth up as dust.” The man is a whited sepulchre, fair outwardly, but inwardly full of all that is vile and loathsome. The heart, in truth, is the proper seat of good or evil. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, blasphemies; these come from within, and defile the man. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: the evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things. Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good; but let the tree be bad, and, in the nature of things, the fruit cannot but be evil.

3. Consider holiness with respect to its *introduction* into the soul. There is a time when the soul is unholy. By nature the heart is evil. It is hard, worldly, sensual, proud, impenitent, unbelieving, under the dominion of that evil spirit “who worketh in the children of disobedience.” By the regenerating agency of the Holy Spirit, the heart is changed. Born in sin, it is born again. Dead in sin, it is quickened and made alive by the Spirit of life. Under his benign influence we see things in a different light: the tide of the affections is drawn off from evil, and made to flow towards that which is good; and peace and joy, like the sunshine of spring, come with their reviving influence into the dark and troubled bosom. We experience the sanctification of the Spirit. We become new creatures in Christ Jesus. We put off the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts; and

renewed in the spirit of our minds, we put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. Old things pass away, and, behold ! all things become new.

4. Consider holiness with regard to its *ingredients*. Holiness comprehends a multitude of parts. It is not this or that particular grace : it is an assemblage of graces—the sum of moral excellence. All that are holy are *pure* ; and “ blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” All that are holy *fear* God ; and “ the fear of the Lord is to depart from evil.” All that are holy are *wise* ; and “ a good understanding have all they who do his commandments.” All that are holy love God ; and “ love is the fulfilling of the law.” All that are holy are spiritual ; and “ to be carnally-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.” Why should I amplify ? The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance.” “ The grace of God that bringeth salvation teacheth us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world.” “ Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue ; and to virtue, knowledge ; and to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness, charity.” Such are the ingredients of holiness.

5. Consider holiness with regard to its *extent*. “ Thy commandment,” says the Psalmist, “ is exceeding broad.” The law of God not only extends to all our actions, but it takes cognizance of all the thoughts, motives, and dispositions of our hearts. Now, as sin is the transgression of the law, what is holiness but the obedience which the law requires ? Is the law exceeding broad ? So broad—so extensive is that holiness which God enjoins. We are commanded to be holy in *all manner of* conversation. We are to be holy, not only in some things, but in all things ; holy not only in regard to some sins and some duties, but holy in regard to all sins and duties ; holy not only in great things, but in small things ; holy in our affections as well as in our actions ; holy in all stations and relations ; holy at all times, and in all places ; holy in secret as well as in public ; holy in the closet and the church, in the house and in the world.

6. Consider holiness in regard to its *objects*. The grand central and centreing object of holiness is God. Till the soul be united to God in Christ Jesus, there is no holiness. United to Christ, like a planet wheeling in its orbit round the



sun, the soul performs the grand revolution of holiness through the atmosphere of happiness. What is holiness in relation to God? It is setting the Lord before us; loving him; delighting in him; worshipping him; employing all our powers in his service; and, whatever we do, doing all to the glory of God. What is holiness in regard to the law of God? It is delight in his law, a cheerful obedience springing from supreme veneration for the divine authority. In regard to duty, it is doing *whatsoever* is commanded. In relation to sin, it is opposition to all evil.

7. Consider holiness with regard to its *fruits*. Is the saint tempted? He says, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God." Is he invited to have fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? When God says "Seek ye my face;" he replies "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Is he afflicted? He exercises his soul as one who knows that the Lord chastens us not for "his pleasure, but for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." Is he called to observe the ordinances of religion? He employs them as the appointed means whereby he may grow in grace, and draw nigh to God in the beauty of holiness.

8. Consider holiness in its *progress*. Commencing in regeneration, holiness is progressive. It is susceptible of growth, and goes on from stage to stage, and from strength to strength. The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger. The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Sinless perfection, indeed, belongs not to this life; and the holiness of the best is liable to stagnation and decay; but God will guard the sacred treasure from the corruption of earth, and from the enmity of hell, and bring it without fail to the promised perfection of heaven. "Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform unto the day of Jesus Christ."

9. Consider holiness in its *end and issue*. The end is everlasting life. Holiness fits for heaven. Holiness is the commencement of heaven. Heaven is the continuance and consummation of holiness. As a man is when he dies, he must remain so for ever. Death sets its seal upon the moral character. In eternity, there can be no change of nature more than change of place. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and they shall not only be miserable, but wicked there for ever. The righteous shall inherit the heaven prepared for them; and they shall not only be happy there, but holy there.

for ever. Let the axe of death descend. The cord of life is cut; and man's moral character, as well as destiny, is fixed for ever! "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still. He that is holy, let him be holy still."

II. The model of holiness and the motive to it here exhibited—God's own holiness. "Ye shall be holy; *for I the Lord your God am holy.*"

THE MODEL. God set himself before us as the MODEL, after which he would have us copy. We are imitative beings. From our childhood up, we are what we are, in a great degree, from the principle of imitation. Hence it is that example is so powerful for good or evil. We are fond of placing before our minds those characters, either in history or in active life, which have attracted our admiration. We come insensibly to realise their principles and imitate their conduct. "We catch the likeness we contemplate, and grow into the excellence we admire." In proportion to the grandeur of the character which kindles our admiration, in proportion will it communicate a kindred elevation to our feelings and principles. Who is there that can be compared to God? His character comprises all that is good and great. The study of the divine character stamps a corresponding impression on the soul. If we behold him, we shall resemble him. "Beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of our God."

But where shall we behold God? He is invisible. No man hath seen God at any time. Is there not an impassable barrier here thrown across our upward ascent to the contemplation of God? This difficulty God himself has obviated. He has revealed himself to us in the person, in the life, and in the sacrifice of his Son. Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible of God. He is not only the essential, but the *representative* image of the Father. "He that hath *seen him*, hath seen the Father." If then you would know fully what God is, study the history of Jesus Christ. Behold him incarnate. See him in his miracles of mercy and of power. Behold his tears at the tomb of Lazarus, and as he wept over doomed Jerusalem. View him in the garden! Stand beneath his cross! Behold in all the grand expression of God's goodwill to man! Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

If you would be like God, set the life of Christ before you. He left us an example, that we should follow his steps. To



be like God, we must be conformed to the image of his Son. "I," says he, "and my Father, are one."

*The MOTIVE.* God not only here sets himself before us as the model, but as the grand MOTIVE to holiness.

1. God is holy, and unless we be holy we cannot be *like* him. If you be not like God, whom must you resemble? whom, but the great enemy of God and man? How can you bear such a thought? You see a deformed fellow-creature—without feet, without hands, with features dreadfully distorted, lying as it were blasted, by the way-side, with a voice scarcely human, asking the passers by for charity; and you bless, with strong emotion, the God who has given you your bodily members and senses perfect. How could you bear the thought of being changed in a moment from what you are, to be like that miserable mockery of humanity? But what is deformity of body to deformity of soul? Is not wickedness of soul immensely worse than any bodily deformity whatever? You shudder at the idea of changing places with the miserable cripple at your door. But is it not worse to be like a wicked man? Is it not still worse to be like devils? But devils you must resemble, unless you be like God; and you cannot be like God unless you are holy.

2. God is holy; and unless you be holy, you cannot *serve* him. God is a master, and he requires that we should serve him. Holiness is the service he requires. Holiness includes all that he requires. He requires nothing more, and he will accept nothing less. How then can you serve him unless you be holy? "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Wash ye; make ye clean; put away the evil of your doings; cease to do evil; learn to do well."

3. God is holy; and unless you be holy, you cannot *please* him. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. He is angry with the wicked every day. In vain is it that men think to substitute the outward observances of religion, or mere worldly morality, for the beauty of holiness. In the absence of inward holiness, it is abomination to the Lord. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

4. God is holy; and unless you be holy, he will not *own* you. He knows them that are his now; and he will publicly declare and own them in the day of judgment. We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ to receive accord-

ing to the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil. To each of us, Christ now says in the way of warning, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." On the unholy, he will then pronounce the irrevocable doom, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

5. God is holy; and unless we be holy, we cannot *enjoy* him in this life. God made man happy as well as holy. We are unhappy, only in consequence of unholiness. God causes his people to drink of the water of happiness, even here below; and he makes them happy by bringing them to himself as the only sufficient portion of the soul. How then can he that is unholy enjoy that happiness which is to be found in God only? "Evil cannot dwell with him, nor fools stand in his sight." To enjoy the miserable pleasures of sin which perish with the indulgence, and which parch the thirsty soul with burning torment—to enjoy even for the moment those miserable pleasures, the soul must banish God—exclude all thought of God. Let but one thought of God flash across his conscience, and even in the midst of the madness of his mirth, the sinner fears and trembles. Such is the madness and misery of that happiness, which is sought by the exclusion of God.

6. God is holy; and unless you be holy, you cannot be *admitted into his presence and kingdom hereafter*. "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." "Into heaven shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, or whatsoever worketh abomination." It is so by the decree of God; and it is so in the nature of things. Think of the greatest impossibility which you can figure to your minds. Is it not impossible for the beast, whose element is land, to subsist in water? Is it not impossible for the fish, whose element is water, to subsist on land? No impossibility is so great as the impossibility of the unholy being admitted into the presence of God, or of enjoying the felicities of the heavenly world. Were the sinner taken up to heaven, he could not be happy there. There is nothing there which he has been trained to value or to relish. Its society—its employments—its joys are the opposite of his taste and habits. And how could he bear the full blaze of Jehovah's majesty, when one glimpse of the descending Judge, though but in anticipation, is sufficient to fill the soul with consternation and dismay? You may be in a state of grace, and when you die ascend to glory, without learning, without wealth, without friends; yea, if you were as poor and as forlorn as Lazarus, lying covered with ulcers at the rich man's gate. But if you



could combine in yourself all the learning, and all the genius, and all the wealth, and all the fame, that have ever belonged to all this world's poets, and philosophers, and princes, and heroes, and died without holiness, how could you escape the damnation of hell?

If then we would resemble God; if we would serve him; if we would please him; if we would have him own us at the great day; if we would be happy in his favour in this world, and be taken to his presence and his joy hereafter, let us hearken to the voice of God that now addresses us—"Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." "As he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy for I am holy."

LUTHER.

## COMMANDING THE SERVICE OF THE PRESS.

*To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.*

GENTLEMEN,—A well-deserved compliment to the Editor of the Belfast News-Letter, which I read a few days since, reminded me of a determination which I had frequently made, to call public attention to the propriety of compelling the public press to a more decided advocacy of morality and true religion. Any one who has been behind the scenes, as I have been at times, must entertain no very high estimate of the sources of information from which the public draw their supply of NEWS.

Any one, for example, who has been present at a public meeting in London, and seen there two or three reporters by trade, some of them likely drunken Irish Papists, taking a jotting now and again, and then going to the different newspaper offices to sell a long or short account of the meeting, according to the taste of each editor—whoever traces up the account of a meeting to the report of some one of the kind of reporters which I have sometimes seen, or whoever has had the misfortune, as has been my own fate at times, to be reported by one such, cannot entertain a very sublime idea of the accuracy of the information which is disseminated through many channels over the country, and over the world.

Let me, however, give an illustration. At one large religious meeting, in which I took a part, a reporter from the London Times (a very fine gentleman) was present. He deigned now and again to take a note of the proceedings; and next day

there appeared in the Times a report, turning the whole proceedings of the meeting into ridicule. Well, you may say this was as might be expected of the Times. But, the day after, came forth the Record, a religious paper, anxious of course, to give a favourable representation of the meeting; and a favourable representation it truly did give in an introductory paragraph; but judge of the sources of public information through the public press, when I tell you, that as a continuation of this same paragraph came the report without alteration of the Times newspaper, turning the whole business into ridicule; the editor of the Record having, most probably, never read the report in the Times at all, which, no doubt, in good faith of the *veracity* of his contemporary, he had appropriated to himself.

If religious people wish to be faithfully reported, they must report for themselves. Some years ago, a couple of very expert Roman Catholic reporters were engaged to report the proceedings of an interesting meeting of the Bible Society. They were willing to do their best; and a very full report they certainly did make; but, to the great annoyance of their employers, a good share of the report was found to be nonsense. The simple fact was, the men were out of their sphere—they could have reported very well a speech in Parliament, but they knew nothing of the peculiar phraseology of religious speakers—nothing of the Bible or references to it. The whole subject was new and foreign to them; and, therefore, their report was a chapter of blunders.

Religious people have, however, a more important concern than reporting for themselves, to compel the services of the public press; they must take care what they do report. Just look, Messrs. Editors, as a specimen, to the long reports of ordination dinners and speeches which have defiled the columns of our papers for years past, and you will at once perceive what I mean. Have these poor young fellows, who get ordained, no one friend to prevent them from telling the whole world how very bombastic, and how very flowery, and shallow, and empty they were on their ordination day. It is really too bad, that when public opinion has forced open a whole column it may be, of a secular newspaper, for the reception of religious intelligence, all that should be thrust into it is a miserably drooping, bedabbled, withered nosegay.

It is clear that newspapers, having as their prime object to make money, will insert whatever is likely to give most general satisfaction, and obtain the largest number of subscribers. An



editor, therefore, must consult public taste, and be governed by it. If his subscribers are religious, he must seem to be religious too; else, as he naturally calculates, his paper will not sell. A religious public have it therefore in their power to make every paper a religious paper, which is dependent on them. I do not mean to say that they can compel the proprietors to convert a mere political paper, into a paper in the strict sense of the term religious, excluding politics, or giving politics only a secondary place; but they can compel the proprietors to make it decidedly favourable to religion—religious in its tone and spirit; and open always to the reception of communications of a decidedly religious character.

Why therefore should not Ulster, professedly so Protestant, and moral, and religious—why should not Ulster exercise over all her newspapers a much more decidedly religious influence than has been done in time past? In what way has religion exhibited itself heretofore in our newspapers? Chiefly in fierce politico-theological controversy—fierce and bitter, and I was going to say blood-thirsty controversy. It is no business of mine to settle whether or not there be any truth in the argument of duelists, that no class of people are so foul-mouthed as women and preachers who cannot fight duels; but of one thing I am perfectly certain, that all the rancour, and venom, and desperate malignity added together, which has appeared in our papers about canals, and rail-roads, and banks, and police committees, &c., would not make a titling of what has been emptied forth, apparently from inexhaustible fountains, by religious controversialists. You know yourselves, gentlemen, that letters have appeared in the Belfast newspapers, and been highly applauded too, in which, after the writer, and that writer a minister of the Gospel of peace, had used every term of sarcasm, and irony, and invective, and reproach; and had completely exhausted all his vocabulary, and all his powers of searing and branding, and vituperation, he wound up the whole by a declaration, that his adversary's case was so hopeless that all he could do for him was to pray for him! Is this caricature, gentlemen, or painting to the life? Has not Ulster seen it and read it; and has not a portion of religious Ulster loudly applauded?

We have too long compelled the public press to pander to bad passions, and converted them into arenas for pugilism. A very proper zeal has been awakened lately in Belfast against cock-fights, and dog-fights; it is fully time that we should put an end to man-fights too, for every body knows that it is

the very same blood-thirsty spirit which takes a man to a dog-fight and a man-fight, whether blood be drawn with the cudgel, the fist, or the pen; and certainly of the two kinds of man-fights, one with the fist in the ring, and the other with a pen in a newspaper, where bad passion is exercised in the name of religion, I decidedly prefer the former. The pugilists of the ring act the ruffian openly and manfully, while the infuriated religious controversialist, with heaven on his lips, and hell in his heart, is whining about sacred truth and the glory of his Saviour, while his object is to gratify revenge, and gain a selfish triumph.

But enough of this, and more than enough; let the religious public show the editors of newspapers that their taste is changed, and that so far from having any relish now for rancorous controversy, they will not endure it, nor read the newspaper which receives it.

In such a population as that of Ulster, the newspapers can surely be generally compelled to exercise a very extensive influence on behalf of every thing good. By using the term compel, I do not reflect on the character of the proprietors or editors of any of them, I can bear honourable testimony to the cheerfulness with which some of them contribute their moral influence to the advancement of every good work; but I take for granted that, like other people, they look after their own interests; and I wish to impress on the religious public the necessity of letting the conductors of public journals feel that it is their interest to be the friends of religion. A newspaper will be just as friendly to religion as its supporters choose to make it. If any newspaper is not friendly to religion, let its supporters look to themselves, for with them is the blame. Let the friends of religion, therefore, and of every benevolent object, commence working the public press with a decision and energy heretofore unknown.

With the exception of the temperance society, scarcely one of the great institutions of Ulster has employed to any considerable extent the journals of the province. Let all those engaged in promoting moral reformation remember, that one very powerful argument with the multitude is the argument of success; and that it is every man's duty, not only to do what is right, but to let it be known, for the benefit of others, that his duty is done. Let the success of Christian missions, therefore, travel the round of our newspapers, and the substantial good effected by all our benevolent institutions; let the secretaries of different societies consider it to be one part of their duty to sup-



ply the public press with interesting materials respecting the necessity, the agency, and the success of their different systems of reformation. Let them offer to the public mind, in many and varied forms, materials for information and impression; let them mingle their favourite subject with others, so that readers of all classes may be caught and interested. And in every communication for the public good, let a generous Catholic spirit breathe untainted with party politics or sectarian bigotry. Let Christians of all denominations present to the world a close, united front; let them give evidence of the spirit of love which Christianity breathes; let no object more contracted satisfy their wishes, than the conversion of the world to God.

Yours,

VOLONONPOSSUM.

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MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. HENRY BELFRAGE, D.D.,

*Minister of the United Secession Church, Falkirk.*

DR. BELFRAGE was born at Falkirk, on the 24th of March, 1774. His father was the proprietor of Coliston, in Kinross-shire, (to which property Dr. Belfrage afterwards succeeded,) but he resided always in Falkirk, as he was one of the ministers of the Secession in that town. He laboured for forty years in the vineyard, and, in a good old age, "was gathered to his people," after having enjoyed for some years the valuable assistance of his son Henry, who had been called by the congregation to be his father's colleague and successor.

After being grounded in the elementary branches of a common and classical education at the grammar school of Falkirk, Henry Belfrage was removed, in 1786, when only thirteen years of age, to the University of Edinburgh. He there passed through the ordinary course of literary and philosophical study, which is demanded by the Secession Synod. Having studied at the University for four successive sessions, he entered the Hall in 1789, as a student of divinity, under Dr. Lawson. While at the Hall, he endeared himself to his fellow-students by his lively and social temper, and even then gave marks of that deep and ardent piety which was afterwards so richly developed in his life. There, too, he laid the foundation of several of those *friendships* which cheered him to the close of life, and, during the course of it, gave occasion to a pretty extensive epistolatory correspondence, which, happily for the

Christian Church, is still preserved, and will yet be published in an extended account of his life and character. The Divinity Hall is, in general, the birthplace to those attachments to one another, which, in this division of the island, have made the *brotherly love* of Secession ministers to be well spoken of, and have, in no small degree, upon the principle that union is strength, contributed to their prosperity and usefulness.

After license, Dr. Belfrage took his place in the church as one of its most popular and esteemed probationers. In a few months, he received three different calls from the congregations of Saltcoats, Lochwinnoch, and Falkirk; this last was from the congregation of which his father had long been and still was the pastor. So soon, however, as the son was licensed to preach, this church resolved to call him to be the colleague and successor of their then aged and infirm minister. It is not to the credit of humanity that in general "a prophet has no honour in his own country." When the truth of this sentiment is reversed, it must certainly the more highly commend the individual whose talents can overcome common antipathy, and elicit approbation whence it is most penuriously and most unfrequently drawn. To this praise Dr. Belfrage is entitled. Where he was earliest and best known, and almost among those who enjoyed the most of his society, was he most respected and beloved. He could not have received a happier compliment at this time than the call from his native congregation to become to them the breaker of the bread of life. In his speech before the Synod, where the claims of the three competing churches were judged, he preferred the call to Falkirk; and his principal reason for so doing was, that he might sweeten by his presence and assistance the closing life of his father, and take upon himself the most of that burden of labour for which age was now unfitting him. Having delivered all his ordination trial discourses, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Falkirk, on the 18th of June, 1794, and in the twentieth year of his age. His father enjoyed the filial and collegiate help of Dr. Belfrage four years, when he died on the 14th of May, 1798.

No view can be taken of Dr. Belfrage's ministerial life which does not reflect upon him the highest credit. From the very outset he maintained the most elevated ideas of the importance and responsibility of his office. He was with his people "in fear and in much trembling." It was no trifle in his estimation to "watch for the souls," and to minister to the spiritual wants of immortal men. This, then, was what he not only *purposed*,



but performed. He gave up his whole heart, and mind, and strength, to furnish to his flock "the finest of the wheat." The life of Dr. Belfrage is at once a rare, and I had almost said a perfect, specimen of *entire* devotion to "the work of an evangelist." The most prominent and commanding feature of that life was unquestionably its thorough and beautiful *uniformity*. His time, his ease, the world, even in its innocent recreations;—his talents, his *all*, were cheerfully brought and laid at the feet of his Redeemer. Truly this was a sacrifice "holy and acceptable to the Lord," who in his grace and mercy conferred in return upon his servant not a few of the most precious qualifications for the Gospel ministry, and crowned also his labours with manifold success. The high order of talents, however, which were bestowed upon him, he did not abuse. He did not trust exclusively to these talents, but by close and persevering study, he continued to improve his mind, and lay all these gifts of grace under contribution to the service of his God. Neither did he furtively expend those talents upon studies of an extrinsic nature to those peculiar to his office. There have been ministers who, in the pride of intellect, have thought it derogatory to their dignity to confine their talents to the mere preaching or expounding of the Gospel, forgetting that for them it is a prostitution of talent to leave the study of "the deep things of God," and waste their intellectual powers over less holy and useful topics of research. He was convinced, and acted upon the conviction, that nothing so much ennobled talent as its achievements in the cause of *human salvation*; that no laurel looked so beautiful on the brow of the learned as that which was wreathed by success in Christian philosophy; that no complacency of mind can equal his who is made the blessed instrument of bringing lost men to the belief of "the truth as it is in Jesus;" and that no monument can be so magnificent or durable as that which is placed in the temple above to the honour of him who has been made "wise to win souls."

Dr. Belfrage, as a preacher, "gloried in the cross of Christ." Above all other themes it delighted him to expatiate on the cross and love of the Messiah. The awful realities of death, judgment, and eternity, were no doubt often discoursed upon, and indeed he seldom concluded a sermon without enforcing its propositions by some reference to these solemn subjects. But "God in Christ reconciling the world to himself," was the master gem in his preaching, that brightened with its rays of love all the other precious truths that fell from his lips. To

make Christ known—to display his *fitness, power, and willingness* to save—these were the *amulet* truths that charmed the minds of his audience, and raised their wondering eyes to the “bright and morning star,” the fountain of all their beauty and influence. Such was the *matter* of his discourses. As to the *manner* of delivering them, it was strikingly solemn. His utterance at the commencement of his ministry was uncommonly rapid; in after life, it became more and more deliberate, and for many years before his death it was sufficiently slow and distinct. His deportment in the pulpit was imposing and dignified. You saw before you a man full of the importance of his office. His expressive countenance indicated his deep concern in the truths he was declaring, and the earnest and pathetic appeals which he made to sinners showed how anxious he was that they should accept of the heavenly manna. His voice was full of pathos and music, and finely calculated to arrest even the most careless mind. You could not listen to him for many minutes without feeling that the preacher had rivetted your attention, and that his melting tones had already subdued you into a serious and devotional frame. This was peculiarly the case when he was addressing communicants at the Lord’s table—a branch of the ministerial service in which he engaged with a full and flowing heart. It was a privilege which many desired, that they might be seated at the communion-table which Dr. Belfrage addressed. The very pronouncing of the word *communicants* was sufficient often to melt them into tears. That heavenly voice is now silent, and we shall no longer hang with holy interest on its sacred melody.

In the regular discharge of the subordinate duties of his office, Dr. Belfrage took great delight. While he regarded the public preaching of the Gospel as his principal duty, he did not withhold that “pastoral superintendence,” without which, preaching is attended with less likelihood of success. It was his constant practice to visit once every year every family in his large congregation. On these occasions he gave a suitable address and prayed. He also once every year *examined* all the members of his church, as to their attainments in Christian knowledge. He was peculiarly attentive to the interests of the young, and instituted classes for their religious instruction, over which he watched with parental care. There was no part of his sacred functions to which he paid more strict attention than the visiting of the sick and dying, and the mourning and bereaved.

Your readers will no doubt be surprised when they peruse



the above account of his pastoral labours, and remember, at the same time, that he was one of the most voluminous and useful religious *authors* of his day. It is evident that he must have occupied the time which other men spend in recreation, in constant study. In the midst of his necessary and numerous avocations, while preparing faithfully two discourses every week for the pulpit, and attending on all the other duties of the ministry, Dr. Belfrage found leisure to compose and make ready for the press, those invaluable works which have so endeared his name and memory to the Church of Christ. From the year 1815, in which his first work, the "*Sacramental Addresses*," appeared, to 1832, in which he published the second edition of his "*Exposition of the Catechism*," he gave to the Church twelve volumes. In addition to these he took part along with the Rev. Mr. Hay, of Kinross, in compiling that finished and popular biography, the memoir of Dr. Waugh. He also published several catechisms for the young, and was an occasional contributor to the different religious periodicals of the day. In the pages of the *Evangelical*, of the *Christian Instructor*, *Monitor*, *Theological*, *United Secession*, and other Magazines, may be found many excellent and instructive articles from the pen of this laborious and useful writer.

It would have been a reproach to our Scottish Universities if they had allowed such a man as Dr. Belfrage to live and die without conferring on him some academical honour. Through the instrumentality of the late Rev. Sir Henry Moncreiff, who was the friend and distant relative of Dr. Belfrage, the attention of the *Senatus Academicus* of St. Andrews was drawn to this subject; and he received the degree of D.D. from that University in March, 1824. This honour was wholly unsolicited and unexpected by Dr. Belfrage.

In sketching the character of such a man as Dr. Belfrage, an ample field for illustration opens up in his public-spiritedness and philanthropy. His heart warmed towards every humane and charitable object. To all such institutions in Falkirk and its vicinity, he readily gave every countenance and support. The charity school in that town, which is at this moment furnishing education to many orphan children, took its rise under his wise and encouraging patronage. It was expressly for the benefit of this school that he published his first catechism, and to the end of his life he took a deep interest in its success. His "charity never failed," but was "long-suffering and kind." In him the orphan saw a father, the needy a helper, the bereaved a comforter, and the dying a guide. "The blessing of

him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

There is also a strong temptation to enlarge upon the numerous and peculiar excellencies of his more private character. It is in general a delicate task to remove the curtain from before the family altar. In this instance, the most minute inspection will serve only to increase admiration. If his public life presents so much of what is lovely and attractive, there are traits in the domestic portrait of exquisite beauty. Ever kind, attentive, and affectionate to his amiable and excellent partner in life—unbroken harmony blessed their union. Peculiarly gifted with the parental sympathies, his children were to the last the objects of his deepest concern. The best inheritance he has left them will be found in the answer to those prayers which he lodged in heaven for their salvation. Possessed of much of the generosity and enlarged sympathies of genuine friendship, he had many dear and most intimate friends; nor can it hurt the feelings of any to say, that of all his friendships he was himself the "*decus et tutamen*"—at once the ornament and stay. *His heart was friendship*, and its goings forth, like those of the morning, carried light and gladness to all who had an advocate in his bosom.

Equally honourable to Dr. Belfrage would be the picture of his personal piety. *He was a man of God*. Holiness seemed to be inscribed on his very look and bearing. It appeared as if he had lived under the awing impression of this truth, "Thou God seest me." He had always the deportment of one that dwelt at the foot of the throne of majesty, and was accustomed to receive audience of the great Jehovah.

It could not be otherwise—*he was a man of prayer*. In prayer he "lived, and moved, and had his being." Prayer made Dr. Belfrage what he was. But with all he was also an *humble man*—meek and unassuming to a degree that seemed only to add dignity and weight to his character and words. He was a *complaisant man*. His manner was certainly imposing, but not haughty; it was rather mild, polite, and condescending. He was born a gentleman; he made the humblest individual feel at home in his presence, and was delighted to honour and notice any who from excess of modesty were timid of observation. In short, he was a *happy man*. There was no austerity or moroseness about his habits. A more cheerful companion could not be desired. A very short residence at Rose Park would have convinced the slanderers of religion that its tendency was the reverse of melancholy. There religion

certainly maintained its sacredness and its service, but there also it made the spirit glad and the tongue to sing, hallowing with its pure and gentle influences the innocent enjoyments of life.

“He was a burning and a shining light, and we were willing for a (longer) season to rejoice in his light.” Such, however, was not the will of God. Dr. Belfrage enjoyed almost uninterrupted health till within a year or two of his decease. The constitution must have been naturally strong which supported him for 40 years under labours so incessant, severe, and various. In the autumn of 1834, symptoms appeared of an apoplectic tendency, which gave much alarm to himself and friends. He was several times attacked with violent bleedings at the nose, by which his strength was much reduced. His ministerial work, however, was still continued, and he was even making preparations for giving to the world another volume or two of his invaluable compositions. These works, indeed, are fully prepared for the press, and it is to be hoped that the pious intentions of the author may yet be fulfilled. In the end of the year 1834, and in the beginning of 1835, he rallied somewhat, but his health was evidently in a precarious state. In the spring he was again attacked as before, and it was now but too evident that his constitution had received a shock which it was not likely it would ever recover. His bodily vigour now gradually left him. During the summer he preached very little, and though every remedy that could be devised was tried to restore him to health and usefulness, all was in vain. He went to Airthrey in the month of May to receive the benefit of the mineral wells, but here he became rather worse than better. It was while residing in this sweet and romantic neighbourhood that he preached his last sermon. His friend, the Rev. Mr. M’Kerrow, of Doune, had gone to Falkirk to supply his pulpit, and Dr. Belfrage officiated in Bridge of Teath church. His summer sacrament was now drawing near, and he longed to return home to make the proper arrangements for this, to him, always most interesting and hallowed service. The sacrament was dispensed to his church on the 14th June last, but his increased feebleness prevented him from presiding. This duty the Rev. Mr. M’Gilchrist, of Edinburgh, kindly undertook. Dr. Belfrage must have been very ill indeed to have been a silent spectator on a communion Sabbath. He made an effort on this occasion, and gave the first address to the communicants, with the evening directions, after the services. These were the last public ministrations of this faithful servant



of Christ in the temple below. He never again appeared in the pulpit.

Dr. Belfrage was never closely confined to the house till within a short period of his decease. Indeed, little more than a week before he died, I drove out with him and some members of his family four or five miles into the country. On the day after this, he was laid down upon that bed from which he was removed only to the tomb. It now appeared painfully evident that his end was near. He did not suffer much pain, though his bodily affliction was accompanied with great restlessness and uneasiness. He retained his faculties to the last moment, and gently fell asleep in Jesus, at half-past eleven o'clock, on the forenoon of Wednesday, the 16th of September last. You will excuse the unveiling of the death-bed scenes of this eminent saint. Let your readers believe, on the testimony of an eye-witness, that they were *in all respects fully worthy* of his life. He died "the death of the righteous." These scenes may yet be brought to the light for the comfort and edification of those who must travel through the same "dark valley."

*Manse of Kincardine, Dec. 1835.*

J. M.

## PETITIONS TO PARLIAMENT FOR PREVENTING INTEMPERANCE AND THE DESECRATION OF THE SABBATH.

WE solicit particular attention to the two following Petitions, and earnestly solicit all our friends, whether members of the Temperance Society or not, to lose no time in obtaining for them most numerous signatures.

We congratulate all friends of religion and good order, on the introduction of a bill by the Secretary and Attorney-General for Ireland, directly calculated to diminish the consumption of spirits, to decrease the number of public houses, place publicans under wholesome superintendence and control, and prevent them from pursuing their demoralizing deadly traffic on the Sabbath. Such a bill must have the cordial support of every one who is really desirous of promoting his country's good. Let it be seen, then, how many real patriots we have, to whom our country can look with confidence. Let those who have opposed the temperance reformation, by active or passive resistance, show now that they are not the friends of

drunkenness. On the question of legislative interference, to preserve to all the right of enjoying the rest of the Sabbath, all parties are agreed; let all, therefore, come forward and give their cordial support to a bill calculated to abate one of the most intolerable of nuisances—the sale of intoxicating drinks on the Sabbath. The bill also provides for the appointment of parish overseers to superintend public houses; and without the signature of two of whom, no new license can be obtained. Every true friend of temperance would rejoice to see such a plan carried into effective operation, for, provided a healthy public opinion can be created among the influential portion of the community, they will thus have it in their power to remove temptation out of the way of the wretched offscourings of society, from whom the *liquid death* has taken away all principle and all conscience.

In the bill, however, there is a most important defect; and the religious public should press upon the legislature the necessity of supplying that defect when the bill goes into committee. **THE GROCERY AND SPIRIT LICENSE SHOULD BE SEPARATED.** Their union is a monstrous evil, against which the whole community should rise up as a single man. The mischiefs connected with it are such as no tongue could tell. A very few of them are slightly glanced at in one of the following drafts.

We most earnestly press haste in the getting up of petitions on these most important subjects; not a moment is to be lost. There is every reason to expect that a number of the Irish members of Parliament will strenuously advocate the cause of whiskey drinking. The determination of one of them has already been published in the *Belfast News-Letter*; and no wonder that he should advocate it, as one-fifth, at least, of the constituency of the borough which he represents are whiskey sellers. It is the more necessary, therefore, for all good men to unite now in this good cause, and, politics apart, from what we know of Lord Morpeth, the author of the bill, we feel assured that no exertion, on his part, shall be wanting to promote, in this matter, the real welfare of our unhappy country.

*To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.*

*The Petition of the*

Humbly Sheweth,—That the union of the Grocery and Spirit License is a very great evil, which imperatively calls for

legislative interference. A large part of the spirits sold in retail groceries is consumed on the premises; a fruitful source of temptation is thus opened, by which drunkenness, with its attendant evils, is greatly increased, especially among females, female servants being led to contract depraved habits, often at the expense of their masters, and the wives of industrious tradesmen becoming frequently so depraved as to consume in spirituous liquor a large part of the sum charged to their husbands under the name of groceries. A strong barrier is opposed to the progress of evil, when the spirit trade stands insulated and alone; but by uniting the grocery and spirit license, many are tempted to drink who would not enter a spirit shop, and a facility is thus given to all, particularly females, to indulge in spirit drinking privately.

By the union of these licenses, very many families, who would never have begun to sell spirits alone, are lured into the spirit trade, to their great detriment, as is evident from the fact, stated before a Committee of your Honourable House, that in nine cases, perhaps, out of ten, of persons engaged for any considerable time in the retail spirit trade, the spirit seller himself, or some member of his family, furnishes melancholy evidence of the effect of the spirit trade on the property, wealth, and morals of those who come within the sphere of its desolating influence.

Your Petitioners deem it unnecessary to make any additional statements, having in their favour the Report of the Commissioners of the Irish Poor Laws, and believing that in their present aim they are supported by the intelligence and moral worth of the whole community; they therefore pray that no individual having a license for the sale of groceries shall be permitted to sell spirituous liquor by retail.

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Having reason to believe that Petitions, such as the preceding, will be productive of good effect, in supporting the Bill of Lord Morpeth, at present before Parliament, or in obtaining the entire disunion of the grocery and spirit license, we beg that you will use your best efforts to have Petitions, numerously signed, transmitted immediately to some Member of the House of Commons likely to support it. The Petition may be written on paper, but not printed, and observe to have one or more names on the same sheet as the Petition. If sent to any Member, in a cover open at each end, marked "Petition to Parliament," it goes free, if under six ounces. Females may sign Congregational Petitions, but not others.



*To the Honourable, the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses,  
in the Commons House of Parliament Assembled.*

*The Petition of the undersigned*

Respectfully Showeth—That your Petitioners have perceived, with feelings of great satisfaction, that a Bill has been brought into your Honourable House under the auspices of his Majesty's Government, for amending the laws relating to excise licenses, and to the sale of wine, spirits, beer, and cider, by retail, in Ireland.

That your Petitioners, whilst they beg leave to express their general approbation of the provisions of this Bill, would especially call the attention of the House to the fourth clause, which proposes to enact "that no publican shall, under certain penalties, sell, or suffer to be sold, on his premises, wine, spirits, beer, or cider, at any time whatsoever on any Sunday;" and also, to the twelfth clause, which proposes, that "any person found drunk at any hour of the day or night in any street, lane, road, or other public thoroughfare or place, shall be liable to certain punishments," as particularly deserving the adoption of the legislature.

That your Petitioners are far from wishing to interfere with the real enjoyments of the lower orders; on the contrary, their object is to promote the comfort and moral improvement of the poor man by protecting him in his privilege of the Sabbath, and by leading him, after the labours of the week, away from the haunts of dissipation and profligacy, to spend this holy day in the bosom of his family and the service of his God.

That your Petitioners therefore humbly entreat your Honourable House that the proposed Bill, and in particular the portion above referred to, may pass into a law, without any such alterations as would be calculated to impair its efficiency.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray.

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## WHAT IS THE REASON?

WHAT is the reason that there are real Christians, whose hearts beat high in sympathy for the heathen, and yet will feel a kind of disappointment, as soon as they discover that this article relates to the moral condition of negroes?

What is the reason that there are many in the church, who

give largely and freely to send a preached Gospel to distant lands, and yet never dream of providing one for their servants, who are just as far from heaven, and that too, when it could be done with half the expense and trouble ?

What is the reason that many pray even with tears, for the salvation of the Hindoo and the Chinese, and yet seldom, if, indeed, ever think of offering up one single fervent supplication for those who live in their own families ?

What is the reason that many professors of religion, so far from taking any pains to secure the attendance of their servants upon public preaching, scarcely ever inquire if they attend church ?

What is the reason that a Christian father can bring his wife and children around the family altar, and yet will not cause his servants to attend ?

What is the reason many profess seeming wonder that servants are so bad, tell lies, get drunk, steal, curse and swear, and care so little about religion, when they have never taught them the consequences of such conduct, or even told them what religion was ?

What is the reason that servants cannot be called into the house a few minutes on the Sabbath day, and be affectionately addressed on the great concerns of the soul by their Christian masters ?

What is the reason that this is neglected by masters and mistresses, who are mothers and fathers in Israel ; by deacons, elders, and ministers of the everlasting Gospel ?

What is the reason that many expect their servants to be free from every vice, and even punish them for lying, cursing, stealing, and drinking, and yet use no argument to deter them from such conduct—except this single one, “ *If you do, I’ll punish you ?*”

What is the reason that men will give thousands to send missionaries to teach the heathen to read the Bible, and count that Bible an invaluable jewel to themselves, and yet will give nothing for their servants to be taught to read that very same book—nor even send them to school, if a school and teachers are provided, or if they do this, send them there without a book ?

Humble follower of the meek and lowly Saviour—who may chance to read these lines—will you not go to your closet, and endeavour to answer as many of these questions as are applicable to yourself ?

Would it be requiring too much of you, to go to that

Saviour in prayer, and with an humble and repenting spirit say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do for my poor servants, whom I have so long neglected, for whose salvation I have so seldom prayed, for whose eternal interests I have done so little?"

Will it be too much for you to do for your servants' salvation, when Christ came down from heaven to bleed and die for thine? If so, then I fear that heaven may never be given to thee.—*From the Western Luminary.*

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## ON THE QUESTION OF THE PRIORITY OF FAITH OR JUSTIFICATION.

*To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.*

GENTLEMEN—The article by a correspondent under the signature of "W." in your last, containing a Review of the Reviewer of Dr. Dick's Lectures, is an acute and able piece of theological criticism. Your correspondent exposes in masterly style various blunders of the dogmatic reviewer. It is most amusing to witness the strut and parade of reviewers in general. Formidable as they are supposed, strip them of their incognito, and what a puny, pigmy, ephemeral generation do they prove! It is well that Providence has denied reviewers in general great powers, for they are usually actuated by no little spleen. The Lilliputians waxed valiant in their own small way when they got Gulliver—asleep. Dr. Dick is no more; but the giant is a giant even in his grave, while "pigmies are pigmies though perched"—upon the stilts of a review.

The leading question discussed by Dr. Dick, his Reviewer in the *Presbyterian Review*, and your correspondent "W." in the *Christian Freeman*, is, does justification precede faith or follow it? Which is first? On this point, I am of opinion that Dr. Dick, his Reviewer, and your correspondent "W." are all three wrong. The question, whether faith is before justification or justification before faith, is, in my mind, quite incorrect. Faith does not precede justification, nor does justification precede faith. Both are coeval. The one does not precede the other, but both take place together. He that is justified hath faith, and he that hath faith is justified. There is no justification without faith, and there is no faith without justification. The moment God justifies the sinner, that moment the sinner begins to believe. The moment that the



Holy Spirit works the first act of faith in the soul, that moment God, the judge of all, on his throne of grace above, pronounces the sinner fully justified. Up to the moment a man begins to believe, he is both in his sins and under condemnation; and from the moment of his justification, he is delivered from the power of sin by regeneration, as well as from the condemnation of sin by justification. Justification takes away the condemnation due to sin from off us; faith destroys the dominion of sin within us. Were any space of time, however short, to elapse between our first act of faith and our justification, then it follows that there would be a time in which we were delivered from the power of sin, and not delivered from condemnation—regenerated and yet under wrath! This is impossible—this would be a contradiction. On the other hand, were any space of time, however short, to elapse between our justification and our being first brought to believe, then there would be a time in which we should be delivered from that condemnation which is due to sin, and yet we would be living in that sin which assuredly brings down condemnation. This is impossible—this were a gross contradiction. Justification, therefore, we clearly see cannot take place before faith; nor can faith exist before justification. They are both coeval. And the question itself, “Whether is justification or faith first?” is, in my judgment, an improper one. The question should never have been started. Since, however, it has been started, it is necessary to answer it, and set those right who have gone wrong.

The same mode of reasoning will serve to set at rest a variety of similar questions with which controversialists often perplex and tease each other. Whether is pardon before repentance or is repentance before pardon? Whether is justification before sanctification, or is sanctification before justification? Whether is faith before repentance, or is repentance before faith? All these are co-existent, without any priority of time. They are essentially connected not only in their gift and in their possession, but in the time at which they originate. These questions are not only profitless, but are often abused to pernicious consequences, drawing away the mind from the great truths themselves, to little captious quirks and speculations connected with them.

I have two cautions here to suggest. The first is, Let us not confound justification itself with the *doctrine* of justification, nor the *grace* of faith with the doctrine of faith. The *doctrine* of justification is presented to the mind before there is

faith. The belief of the truth follows the display of the truth. Faith is the result of the Gospel exhibition of the doctrine of justifying grace. But the doctrine of justification is not justification; nor is the doctrine of faith, faith. It was probably from not attending to this distinction, that the question as to the priority of justification or of faith originated.

We need to be cautioned, also, against allowing speculations on points connected with doctrines, to draw away our minds from the matter of the doctrines themselves, or from looking for that saving influence which these doctrines should exert upon our hearts. It is a master-stroke of Satan's policy, when he cannot get men kept from thinking of religion, or when he cannot engulph them in error, to entangle their minds with perplexing speculations and endless subtleties, in order that he may prevent them from receiving and obeying the truth in its love and in its power.

Not to exercise our minds, is to be like our cattle: to exercise them upon evil, is to resemble the fallen spirits: to exercise them only upon the science of this life, is, however useful or necessary it may be in its own place, to be wise only with regard to the objects of time, but not unto salvation; and with respect to the great subjects of religion itself, into which even angels desire to look, if we waste our thoughts upon riddles and subtleties instead of sacred truth, what is it but to exercise our minds without profit, and to be ingenious without being wise?

April 28th, 1836.

LUTHER.

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## HOW TO BE SICK.

1. BE good natured. You may have been very unwise—very foolish, in getting sick. Do not by fretfulness render the matter worse.

2. Be prompt in employing the means of cure. *Obsta principiis*, the old Latins would say; which amounts nearly to our vulgar proverb, *A stitch in time saves nine*. Many die who, had they applied remedies a day earlier, might have lived.

3. Take time to get well. The constitution invaded by disease cannot be restored to full health in a moment. The regaining of its wasted energies must cost some time. Many by disregarding this consideration get sick again, and not a few die. There is no subject in regard to which we may more ap-

propriately apply the adage, *Make haste slowly*, than that of getting well.

4. Resolve to be more careful of health in future. No man surely, should fail to *learn wisdom by the things which he suffers*.

5. Make a time of sickness a time of solemn reflection on the past. Sickness occasions a break in the current of life. Inquire how that current has flowed hitherto. Inquire after neglected duties. In sickness, the soul views things with a more sober eye. Estimates then formed come nearer the truth than under other circumstances.

6. In sickness, if you have the prospect of being well again, consider how you may be more useful in future. Were you when laid on your bed a Christian? Then have you to pursue afresh, with redoubled ardour, your onward course. Were you *not* a Christian? Then let this be the time of giving all to Christ. Consecrate to him your returning strength. Commence living anew and to the glory of his name.

7. In sickness recognize the hand of God. "Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." Whatever may have been our own agency, or the agency of our fellow-men, the Lord's hand is to be acknowledged in the things which we suffer. Be still, therefore, before God. "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." Let sickness be a time of acquainting yourself with God—with his character, his promises, his threatenings, with every thing by which he makes himself known.

8. In sickness bring yourself near to eternity. You are created for eternity. God may have seen you too neglectful of the high interests of that state. Sickness may have been sent as an admonition, to awaken you to better views—to a sense of your frailty, and a new course of action. Fail not, therefore, to use a time of sickness for the high purpose of promoting your immortal well-being.—*Essex Register*.

## SHUTER THE PLAYER.

SHUTER, whose facetious powers convulsed whole audiences with laughter, and whose companionable qualities often "set the table in a roar," was a miserable being. The following anecdote, told from the best authority, will confirm this assertion; and I am afraid, were we acquainted with many of his profession, we should find that his case is by no means singular.



"Shuter had heard Mr. Whitefield, and trembled with apprehension of a judgment to come; he had also frequently heard Mr. Kinsman, and sometimes called upon him in London. One day, accidentally meeting him in Plymouth, after some years of separation, he embraced him with rapture, and inquired if that was the place of his residence; Mr. Kinsman replied, "Yes, but I am just returned from London, where I have preached so often, and to such large auditories, and have been so indisposed, that Dr. Fothergill advised my immediate return to the country for change of air." "And I," said Shuter, "have been acting Sir John Falstaff so often, that I thought I should have died, and the physicians advised me to come into the country for the benefit of the air. Had *you* died, it would have been in serving the best of masters, but had *I*, it would have been in the service of the devil. Oh, Sir, do you think I shall ever be called again? I certainly was once; and if Mr. Whitefield had let me come to the Lord's table with him, I never should have gone back again. But the caresses of the great are exceedingly ensnaring. My Lord E—— sent for me to-day, and I was glad I could not go. Poor things! they are unhappy, and they want Shuter to make them laugh. But Oh, Sir, such a life as yours!—As soon as I leave you, I shall be King Richard. This is what they call a good play, as good as some sermons. I acknowledge there are some striking and moral things in it; but after it, I shall come in again with my farce of 'A Dish of all Sorts,' and knock all that on the head. Fine Reformers we!" Poor Shuter! once more thou wilt be an object of sport to the frivolous and the gay, who will now laugh at thee, not for thy drollery, but for thy seriousness; and this story, probably, will be urged against thee as the weakness of a noble mind; weakness let it be called, but in spite of himself, man must be serious at last. And when a player awakes to sober reflection, what agony must seize upon his soul. Let those auditories, which the comic performer has convulsed with laughter, witness a scene in which the actor retires and the man appears; let them behold him in the agonies of death, looking with remorse on the past, and with terror on the future. Players have no leisure to learn to die; and if a serious thought wander into the mind, the painful sigh which it excites is suppressed, and the wretched creature rushes into company to be delivered from himself.

## GOVERNMENT GRANT TO THE MISSIONARY SOCIETIES FOR WEST INDIA SCHOOLS.

THE Directors of the London Missionary Society have received from His Majesty's Government a circular letter, which has also been forwarded to other Missionary Societies, stating that the sum of £20,000 having been VOTED BY PARLIAMENT, *in aid of voluntary contributions towards the erection of School Houses* in the colonies and settlements in which slavery has been abolished. His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the colonies "proposes, in the distribution of this sum, to avail himself, so far as it may be practicable, of the agency of the several religious societies at present engaged in promoting education among the negroes," furnishing "pecuniary assistance towards the erection of such school-houses for negro education as they may consider to be required during the present year." *The aid is to be furnished on the same principle as that on which assistance is granted towards the erection of schools in connexion with the British and Foreign School Society in this country, viz. the Government advance a sum towards the estimated cost of the building, the remainder to be supplied by the parties by whom it is erected.*

Considering the specific object contemplated in the above communication, *viz. the building of school-houses*, the number of these amounting to between thirty and forty, which the missionaries have stated to be now required, it has appeared to the Directors as a matter of the utmost importance to the negroes that the means of their education should be increased without delay. Considering, further, that the Society has already a missionary apparatus in operation, which will be rendered far more efficient by the proposed addition to the schools; that the schools are to "be conducted on the principles and plan sanctioned by the rules and constitution of the Society;" the Directors have felt it their duty, gratefully to avail themselves of the aid proposed to be rendered, in erecting the school-houses now required, by their missionaries in the British colonies.

The proportion furnished by His Majesty's government is liberal, being two-thirds of the estimated cost of the buildings. It will be paid in this country, or to the missionaries in the colonies. But besides this, and the aid expected in the colonies, further assistance will be required; and for this the Directors respectfully apply to the friends of Scriptural education.

## SPIRIT OF IRISH ROMAN CATHOLICISM.

*From the Christian Magazine, Edinburgh, April, 1815.*

THE following are the facts of a case which was tried some time ago, before justice Day, and a special jury at the Cork assizes. A baker, of the name of Denovan, brought an action against the Rev. Mr. O'Brien, vicar-general to Dr. Coppinger, R.C. Bishop of Cork. The damages were laid at £500. A subscription had been set on foot by the Priest, for the purpose of building a chapel. Denovan was ordered to pay as his quota 16s. 3d. which he accordingly did. He was afterwards called upon to pay 9s., and this sum he likewise paid, but observed, that he was very poor and could not afford it. A third demand was made on him by the Priest, for 16s.; with this Denovan refused to comply. On his going to mass on the following day, he was asked by the Priest, whether he would pay the 16s. or not? He answered, he was not able. The Priest rejoined, "I will settle you." Terrified by this threat, Denovan sent by his wife the 16s. to the Priest, who then refused to take less than two guineas. On the following day, the Priest *cursed* from the altar all who had not paid the sums demanded. Denovan, on the next holiday, was formally excommunicated, and the people pronounced *cursed and contaminated*, if they should *deal* or hold any communication with him. This threat was so effectual, that not one of the country people would sell a turf to Denovan to heat his oven, nor could he sell his bread or flour. Reduced to despair, the baker went in a white sheet to the chapel as a voluntary penance, and asked pardon of God and the Priest for his disobedience. He was then ordered by the Priest to attend him to his own house, where he again demanded the two guineas, which Denovan assured him he could not make up. The excommunication was continued in full force, and he was obliged to shut up his house. These facts were proved by two unwilling witnesses. The jury, after a charge from the Judge, found a verdict for Denovan with £50 damages.

## SLAVERY IN ENGLAND.

By an act of Parliament in 1547, persons able to work who refused to labour and lived idly for three days, were to be branded with a red-hot iron on the breast (both men and women) with the letter V (vagabond), and be adjudged *slaves* for



two years of any person who should inform against such idlers; and it was left to the master to employ the slave in the vilest work, to be fed with bread and water or small drink; and if the slave absented himself for fourteen days, he became a *slave for life*, after being branded on the forehead or cheek with the letter S (slave); and if he ran away the second time, he was to suffer death as a felon.

This was less than 300 years ago. *Now* it is the boast that the moment a slave touches the soil of England he is free. Such changes in public opinion—this is by no means a solitary one—are enough to inspire the Christian philanthropist not only with hope, but with confidence, in the success of efforts to correct prevailing notions and feelings, wherever he may find them wrong. They teach us, too, how thick is the darkness induced by the concurrence of universal custom and individual habit; and hence the sinfulness of a thoughtless acquiescence in any practice merely because we find it generally adopted in the transaction of business, or in the intercourse of social life. We may be “following the multitude to do evil” when we least suspect it.

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### TESTIMONIAL TO THE REV. FREDERIC BUICK, FROM THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SECES- SION CONGREGATION OF AHOGHILL.

On Monday, the 25th. of April, the congregation of Ahoghill, after the close of the sacramental solemnities in that place, publicly presented their young minister with a testimony of their esteem and attachment. This will best appear from the following address, which was read by Mr. John Raphael, of Gilgorm, a most active and public-spirited member of the congregation, in the presence of the session, committee, and assembled members:—

*To the Rev. Frederic Buick.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—At the conclusion of the solemnities which have just taken place amongst us, permit us, in the name of this congregation, to present you with *twenty pounds*, as a small token of our regard.

We come forward thus publicly to express our approbation of your conduct since you have been placed amongst us—especially with respect to your ministrations in the pulpit, your visitations from house to house, and the Christian example which you have set before us.

To this small tribute of our esteem, we beg to add a Bible for

your use, and our best wishes for your success and comfort in this part of our Redeemer's vineyard.

That you may long continue to teach us the great truths of salvation—that you may have many seals of your ministry to present to your divine Lord and Master at the great day, and that your and our dwelling may be in the house of the Lord for ever, is our earnest prayer.

Signed, 25th of April, 1836, on behalf of the First Presbyterian Session Congregation of Ahoghill,

WILLIAM MOORE, *Session Clerk,*

DAVID M'KEE, *Clerk of Congregation.*

Mr. Buick replied in a pleasing, extemporaneous speech, acknowledging, in suitable terms, the esteem and kindness of the congregation. The Rev. Mr. Carmichael, the aged and venerable senior minister, then expressed the delight which he felt at witnessing the scene which had just taken place, and the prosperity of the congregation among whom he had laboured for nearly half a century.

## CLERGY OF SWITZERLAND.

THE following statement, from a paper that lately appeared in a French Journal, furnishes a curious illustration of the influence of Protestantism in diminishing the number of the clergy. It will be noticed that the proportion of the priesthood to the whole population is greatest in the Cantons that are most exclusively Catholic.

CANTONS.	CATHOLIC.		PROTESTANT.	
	<i>Pop.</i>	<i>Clergy.</i>	<i>Pop.</i>	<i>Clergy.</i>
Freybourg	78,600	526	5,100	5
Soleure	52,930	225		
Zug	14,800	137		
St. Gall	99,300	236	58,400	70
Geneva	15,840	24	37,720	38
Vaud	3,922	4	175,851	170
Total	264,500	1,152	277,071	283

It appears, then, that, taking the Cantons together, there is among the Catholic population one clergyman to every 229 souls, while among the Protestants, there is only one to every

976. In the three first-named Cantons, which are almost exclusively Catholic, there is one clergyman to every 164 souls. The whole number of nuns (found in the four first-named Cantons only) is 541. The number of monks is 464; which deducted from the whole number of the clergy given above, leaves 688 secular clergy, or one to every 384 souls.

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### EXCELLENT AMERICAN LEGISLATION.

THE American Congress, soon after the declaration of Independence, passed the following motion :—

Whereas, true religion and good morals are the only solid foundation of public liberty and happiness—

Resolved, that it be, and hereby is, earnestly recommended to the several States, to take the most effectual measures for the encouragement thereof, and for the suppressing of theatrical entertainments, horse-racing, gaming, and such other diversions as are productive of idleness, dissipation, and a general depravity of principles and manners.

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### RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

*Persecutions in Switzerland.*—The Synod of Zurich met on the 6th October last, and had, among its other business, to introduce some new prayers into the liturgy instead of the old ones, which being of an evangelical savour, are not up to the taste of the age! A committee, specially appointed for that purpose, laid a draft of certain forms before the Synod for its opinion. But the prayers thus proposed were judged to be too Christian, and a leader of the ultra-rationalist party moved that the whole should be rejected, and a new committee be appointed to draw up a plan for the entire reform of religious institutions. It appears that this motion was carried, having been supported by certain clergymen who have publicly declared their wishes for the abolishing of Sunday-schools, evening lectures, week-day services, and exhortations and prayers at funerals; maintaining also the uselessness of catechisms and similar methods of instruction. The correspondent in the Berlin journal adds, that the Professor of Divinity, Dr. John Schulthness, the well-known rationalist, advises to expel from the Church of Zurich the few decidedly Christian pastors that remain in it.—*Archives du Christianisme*, Dec. 12, 1835.

A woman named Anne Haus has been put into prison in the canton of Lucerne, (one of the Roman Catholic cantons in Switzerland,) for having exerted herself in the use of means for diffusing the knowledge of the Gospel. She was led to the town of Lucerne by an armed police, *with an open Bible tied to her back!* (glorious ignominy!) in order to be tried upon her appeal from the inferior court—and she was acquitted.—*Ibid.* Nov. 28, 1835.



A zealous Christian, an inhabitant of Turin, Mr. G——, has been lately condemned to imprisonment in chains for the term of five years. for the crime of selling Bibles. On the next day he was pardoned and set at liberty. The condemnation shews, that Piëdmont is far behind our age; the pardon, however, proves that it is making some progress.—*Ibid.*

*Society for Propagating the Gospel.*—The following is an extract from the Report of the Society for the propagation of the Gospel:—“A communication has been made to the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Bishop of Calcutta, stating that her Highness, the Begum Sumroo, now residing in Bengal, had remitted to England the sum of 50,000 rupees, as a donation to such society or societies as his grace may be pleased to select; the proceeds of such donation to be laid out on good security, and the interest only to be expended by the societies. It was also stated to be the wish of her Highness that the fund should be called “the Begum Sumroo’s Gift.” The Archbishop of Canterbury has been pleased to appropriate the whole of this sum to the Society for the propagation of the Gospel. It has been vested in the three per cents, and will be applied in aid of the Society’s expenses in India.”

*Archbishop Whately’s Church Reform.*—Archbishop Whately has been exerting himself to obtain the concurrence of the Episcopal Clergy to a plan of Church Reform—the chief points of which appear to be as follows:—The tithe to be converted into a land-tax, payable by the proprietor of the soil to a board of Commissioners, who are to apportion it among the existing clergy according to their present claims, but, in future, in proportion to the duties actually discharged; the approbation of the bishop of the diocese to be essential in all cases. It does not appear what is to be done with the Bishops’ lands; but it is assumed that the State will derive £200,000 or £300,000 annually from the property now possessed by the Church.

The Archbishop of Dublin’s scheme has received the protest of the majority of the clergy. The whole force he could muster in support amounted to a bare fifty-two. The Protest is the work of the working clergy. Not an episcopal hand is attached to it; but it bears the signature of 18 deans, 27 archdeacons, 96 prebendaries and dignitaries, 408 beneficed clergymen, and 226 stipendiary curates, in all amounting to 775.

## STANZAS ON SPRING.

Far from the city’s smoke we’ll haste unto the verdant fields,  
Where high, among the floating clouds, the Lark its worship yields,  
And where, o’er hill and sunny slope, the glad, exulting breeze  
Bears health upon its rustling wings, and sings amid the trees.

And while we seek the lowly glen, the primrose we will mark,  
That lately lay beneath the clod, when days were dull and dark;  
We’ll view the blackthorn’s bursting buds, and beauteous flowers of  
snow,

While in its play’ful gladsomeness the streamlet shines below.

And while we roam in sylvan dell, or sit in woodland lone,  
We'll list the blackbird's mellow lay, blent with the ringdove's moan ;  
And we will see the gowans sweet upon the uplands high,  
With golden buds of rugged whin, and hear the lapwing's cry.

We'll hear the plough-boy's carol sweet, amid his mirthful glee ;  
The sower scattering wide the seed with pleasure we will see ;  
For from the dawn of rosy morn, until the evening dim,  
Our ears are greeted with a song—one universal hymn.

Stern Winter's sway is ended now, and gladness is abroad ;  
The teeming earth hath heard the voice, and felt the power of God ;  
The icy band is loosening too, that chained the Arctic main,  
And blooming bright the moss-flower shines \* on Afric's sultry plain.

There's sunshine on the silent hill, and beauty in the vale ;  
There's glory in the azure sky, and fragrance in the gale ;  
There's stillness on the placid lakes, and light on gushing floods,  
While a thousand flowers of sparkling hue are bursting in the woods.

And hushed is now the tempest's sweep, and stilled the billow's roar ;  
The sparkling wavelets kiss the rocks upon the peaceful shore ;  
And, like a mirror beautiful, the placid ocean smiles,  
Beneath the blue and cloudless sky, with all her sunny isles.

And while upon the mountain's side, the Lamb is sporting free,  
And while the bird is singing sweet, upon the budding tree,  
The Heaven, the Earth and Ocean vast, their several products bring,  
As offering gifts to celebrate the advent of the Spring.

And 'mid the beauty and the bloom of grove and freshening field,  
The heart of man, to Nature's God, its thankful praise will yield,  
And from his breast, the prayer of love, like incense sweet, will rise,  
Or like the gushing of a fount, that in the woodland lies.

*Fife Herald.*

\* Left in the midst of a wide desert ; despoiled of what little property he possessed, by a band of robbers ; hungry, fatigued, and diseased ; without clothes to protect him from the burning rays of the sun, and almost completely exhausted ; in danger of being torn to pieces by wild beasts, or of being murdered by no less savage men ; Park, the intrepid and justly celebrated African traveller, observed a singularly elegant species of moss, growing amid the dreary waste. The sight electrified him ; a gush of consolation cheered his heart—a gleam of comfort illumined his soul. " Can that Being," he exclaimed, " who, in the desert, preserved and brought to perfection a plant of such uncommon delicacy, desert a human being, a creature of so much superior importance ? Is it possible for any of the Deity's works to be placed, for a moment, beyond his superintending care ?" He felt new vigour ; he started up ; he forgot, for a time, the pressure of fatigue and hunger, and hastening forward, he was soon relieved from a portion of his uneasiness.—*Park's Travels.*